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The Doctrine and Example of Our SAVIOUR publicly conspicuous in doing GOOD to Mankind.

A
S E R M O N
PREACHED AT
St NICHOLAS'S CHURCH in *Newcastle*,
BEFORE THE
G O V E R N O R S
OF THE
I N F I R M A R Y,
For the COUNTIES of
Durham, Newcastle, and Northumberland,
On WEDNESDAY *June 27, 1753.*

BEING

Their ANNIVERSARY MEETING, appointed for returning Thanks to Almighty GOD, for the singular Success He hath been pleased to give to this Charity: And to supplicate the Continuance of His Blessings hereafter.

By ROBERT PARKER, D. D.

Rector of *Elwick*, in the Bishoprick of *Durham*.

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*The DOCTRINE and EXAMPLE of
Our SAVIOUR publicly conspicuous in
doing GOOD to Mankind.*

MATTHEW ix. 11, 12.

*When the Pharisees saw it, they said unto
his Disciples, Why eateth Your Master
with Publicans and Sinners?*

*But when Jesus heard that, he said unto
them, They that be Whole need not a
Physician, but they that are Sick.*



OUR Saviour having called
from the Receipt of Custom
Matthew, his Disciple, to
the Work of the Gospel;
and being in a House with him and others
of the same or like Employment, was seen
by

by some of the *Pharisees*. They were a Sort of *Jews*, much addicted to a scrupulous Observance of the Law of *Moses*. And by Virtue of that Legal Righteousness, they were apt to think highly of their own Sanctity, esteeming themselves too good to have any Regard for Heathens and Sinners. They seem therefore surpris'd and offended to find Our Saviour in Company with People, whom they so much disliked. Whereupon they asked his Disciples: *Why eateth Your Master with Publicans and Sinners? i. e.* What meaneth Your Master, who taketh upon him the Character of Messiah and Son of God, that he deigneth to eat with such exceptionable Companions? Then the Lord Jesus, with the Meekness of Heavenly Wisdom, answered: *They that be Whole need not a Physician, but they that are Sick. i. e.* I go to them, because I came to save that which was lost; and they who

who have Infirmities of Body and Mind are the proper Objects of my Care.

THUS the Words of the Text shew us,

FIRST, That Opinions and Notions may possibly be against what is good and wise, and warranted by the Highest Authority.

SECONDLY, That to take Care of them, who are afflicted with Infirmities of Body and Mind, and have most Need of our Comfort, is to do according to the Doctrine and Example of Jesus Christ.

FIRST, Opinions and Notions may possibly be against what is good and wise, and warranted by the Highest Authority. *When the Pharisees saw it, they said, &c.*

THAT Good and Evil naturally differ from each other, all Men agree. And that
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Difference they can discern, just as by their bodily Eyes they distinguish Colours, and by their Ears Sounds. When the eternal Truths of Morality, when the great Duties of loving God and Man, are declared to them, they have a conscious Sense upon their Minds, answerable to those Doctrines. So that by their Affections they are disposed, by their very Reason they are prompted to approve Works of true Piety and Charity. But it is to be observed, that during the Time of their Earthly Life, Men are frail and fallible Creatures: That their Moral Sense of Good and Evil may be much impaired by Faults of Education, Company, Example, and by vicious Habits; and then in Consequence thereof, the Light of Reason which is in them comes to be comparatively as Darkness: The Thoughts of the Heart, the very Mind and Conscience being depraved with wrong Affections and Perceptions.

W I T H Regard to the Will of God revealed

vealed to us in His Holy Word, there must be a proper Frame of Mind in them who with true Faith receive it; Else it may appear, as it did to the *Jews* a Stumbling Block, and to the *Greeks* Foolishness. *He* Heb. xi. 6 *that cometh to God must believe that He is.*

And *no Man can come to me, saith Our Sa-* John vi. 44 *viour, except The Father Which hath sent me draw him.* For if there be not a good Disposition to do the Will of God, how shall the Doctrine be known to be of God?

INSTRUCTED now by those Oracles of God in His Scripture of Truth, we may perceive that Purposes of Great Good towards Men are not alike discernible to all: That to some perhaps for a Time their Usefulness or their Expedience shall look like Inventions of little or no Value. The Gospel which is the Wisdom and Power of God publickly vouched by Miracles, was for some Ages overshadowed with the Cloud of Heathen Idolatry: Till in the Fulness of

Time those false Delusions gave Way to the Acknowledgment of the Truth. How various at first were the Opinions touching the Great Salvation in Christ! Some from Hearsay had taken an Aversion to it; Because, concerning that Doctrine they knew every where it was spoken against: Others from partial Considerations, or Worldly Interests, judging of the Author of our

John i. 46. Faith said: *Can there any Good Thing*
 vii. 14. *come out of Nazareth? He deceiveth the*
 Matt. xii. *People: He doth not cast out Devils but by*
 24. *Beelzebub the Prince of the Devils.* With such Imputations was that gracious Design of Mercy for a Time slighted: Nevertheless Wisdom was justified. Ill Surmises and Suspicions after a While ceased; and then was he approved the very Christ who came from God and wrought Miracles to heal them that were Sick of divers Diseases: Then he whom the Gainsayers had called the Friend of Publicans and Sinners, appeared to be indeed The Saviour of Man-

kind,

kind, who visited such as had Infirmities of Body and Mind, because they were capable of the Amendment which he came to give.

HENCE we may truly collect that Designs most beneficent seldom, if ever, prove agreeable and acceptable alike to all Sorts of People; Because their Interests and Sentiments being divers, they do not in the same Light behold Schemes of excellent Wisdom. This Charitable Work, however, which we are here assembled to recommend and to advance, Praised be God! hath not been obstructed by many of those Difficulties and Delays: Nay, rather especially favoured of Heaven we have Cause to believe it hath been, remembering how many were ready to distribute, willing to communicate, although in other Respects their Conditions and Sentiments were different. How greatly was the Hand of Providence manifested to raise a House of Mercy here for

the Sick and Poor ; when ſuch a Number of bounteous and cheerful Benefactors freely gave their Help, laying aſide all Party Diffentions in order to unite in ſo good a Work ! Whilſt other Deſigns of true Beneficence have been obſtructed by irreconcilable Opinions and Interests, This merciful Deſign hath had the Happineſs to find willing and friendly Acceptance when firſt offered to the Publick ; Which is indeed a Proof very honourable to this Country, that Wealth is placed in the Hands of thoſe who have a Mind diſpoſed to make good Uſe of it.

ANSWERABLE to this Beginning hath been the ſucceſſful Continuance of Our Infirmary. And we faithfully truſt God's Bleſſing, and the Benevolence of thoſe who delight in Mercy ſhall compleat and perpetuate it. In Truth we have great Reaſon for theſe Hopes, ſeeing that the Scheme of this Charity hath been ordered with ſuch Prudence, Vigilance, Integrity and Unanimity,

mity, as to obtain a general Approbation: Yet, if any Persons think they have just Objections either against Our Design or Oeconomy; fancying perhaps that it hath not all the Perfection it might have: They should do well to consider with themselves What Human Institution can be perfectly free from Faults, or seeming Faults: They might perceive how plausible Objections may be founded on Hear-say and Misrepresentations: How exceedingly improbable it is there should be Abuses or wrong Management, where Persons of the most clear, the most respectable Character are pleased to have the Care of Government, purely for the Love of God and of their Fellow-creatures. Whatever Doubts, or Suspensions, or Rumours, may have been against this Fellowship of Charity: If any such have been, let this Fact be justly weighed against them, of which there is undoubted Assurance: That a great Deal of Good hath actually been done to Many who were trou-

troubled with Sicknefs and Poverty; who had Infirmities of Body and Mind, and muſt owe their Relief to the Beneficence of Others.

WE come now to the Second Particular of the Text: That to take Care of them who are afflicted with Infirmities of Body and Mind, and have moſt Need of our Comfort, is to do according to the Doctrine and Example of Jeſus Chriſt. *But when Jeſus heard that he ſaid unto them, they that be whole need not a Phyſician, but they that are Sick.*

TO all who name the Name of Chriſt this is an affecting Conſideration: And to us eſpecially who are here this Day met together; becauſe, it properly ſhews that the Charitable Inſtitution we are now endeavouring to promote, is founded on Evangelical Truth. To this Purpoſe we may obſerve that the Antient Prophets, and *Iſaiah* in particular, ſpeaking of the Age of
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The *Messiah*, ascribe to it the Power of Healing. *Then the Eyes of the Blind shall* Isa. xxxv. 5, 6. *be opened, and the Ears of the Deaf shall be unstopped: Then shall the lame Man leap as an Hart, and the Tongue of the Dumb sing.* By this Token he was to be signalized for the very Person who should set up a Kingdom never to be destroyed, and should make Reconciliation for Sin. And so we find when he called Men to Repentance, he cured all Manner Mat. iv. 23. of Sicknefs, and all Manner of Disease. When it is declared how God anointed Jesus of *Nazareth* with the Holy Ghost and with Power, it is said in Effect he did Good, doing Cures on the Sick. Moreover when he commanded the Gospel to be published throughout the World, among his other Instructions, was that of healing the Sick. And we have Reason to believe, he meant that Healing should sometime be wrought by the usual Applications of Medicine upon the Poor who had Need of such

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charitable Relief. For besides that he saith, they that be Sick have Need of the Physician; we find he proposeth to Imitation the Good *Samaritan*, who pouring in Oil and Wine bound up the Wounds of the Man that fell among Thieves, and was left half dead: Who bound up his Wounds, and likewise was at Expence to have him taken Care of. And withal 'tis very remarkable, that when Our Saviour mentions the Works meet for Repentance and Salvation, which he will most require at the Judgment of the Great Day, Visiting the Sick, which may imply both the giving of Medicines, and the administering of Spiritual Consolation: Visiting the Sick is One of the Offices of Charity which with the choicest Beatitudes he will reward.

WITH this Doctrine and Practice of Our Saviour, if we compare the House of Mercy here instituted, we shall find it formed with very good Agreement to his Plan of Beneficence. For the Original Design of
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it was, and the Effect of it hath been by voluntary Association and divers Sorts of Benefaction to provide for the Sick and Lame Poor: And most especially for Those at all Times, who by sudden Accidents might be maimed and helpless. The Benefit of this Infirmary is freely given to all, who are worthy and proper Objects, without any sinister Regard to Party Distinctions Civil or Religious. And what shews it to be perfectly agreeable to the Spirit of the Gospel is the Provision it makes for the Distempers of the Soul as well as of the Body. It gives Meat to the Hungry, Drink to the Thirsty, Cloaths to the Naked, and Visiting to the Sick. With such a true Sense of Piety it hath been regulated, that particular Thanks to The Almighty are to be rendered publickly by every One there restored to Health: And a General Thanksgiving once a Year is to be solemnized, as on this Day, for the Blessings of His Providence already vouchsafed,

Pet. iv.
11.

safed, and to supplicate the Continuance of them: *That God in all Things may be glorified through Jesus Christ.*

AND what is the Consequence of this pious and charitable Design? It hath some Reward following it in this World. The Rich here serve the Poor, 'tis true: Yet at the same Time both the Publick and Private Weal is promoted. The Science of Medicine is thereby improved in its several Branches: Which Improvement may be salutary to the Richest of Men as it hath been to the Poorest. And it is a Fact worthy of our Notice, that every One of the Sick and Lame, who are restored to their Health, to their Family, and to their Friends by the Help of this Charity; and are then honestly and usefully employed in their Callings, are an Addition to the Publick Opulence, Commerce and Security, wherein we are all of us concerned.

WHAT

W H A T hath been said, I trust, may help to shew, that the Publick Infirmary here founded is very agreeable to true Religion, is warranted by the perfect Precepts and Example of Our Saviour. Let me exhort You therefore all that are here present to befriend this truly Christian Work, according to the Opportunity You have, with Your Aid and Encouragement. They that are already Contributors and Benefactors, I persuade myself, will esteem this a Consideration of great Concern to them, that they adorn the Doctrine of God and Our Saviour with their Inspection and Munificence, with their Advice and Attendance. And I trust others likewise seeing their good Works, and hearing their good Word will be excited to add their Bounty towards perfecting and supplying the Goodly Edifice, which this Charitable Society hath built and appropriated to the Poor; Even to those Representatives of Jesus

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Christ,

Mat. xxvi. Christ, which he hath said: *Ye have al-*
 11. *ways with You.*

AND lest any of us should in any Sort
 be weary of this good Work, You will
 give me Leave to remind You of what is
 told us in the Name of God. We are all
 of us subject to Accidents and Infirmities;
 neither know we how soon and to whom
 may be sent the Terror by Night, or the
 Arrow that flieth by Day. 'Tis a com-
 fortable Saying therefore that is written:

Psalm xli. *Blessed is he that considereth the Poor and*
 1, 3. *Needy: The Lord shall deliver him in*
Time of Trouble.——The Lord comfort
him when he lieth sick upon his Bed:
Make Thou all his Bed in his Sickness.
 What Man is he that hath not offended
 against God, and hath not Sins to be for-
 given? The Means available towards Par-
 don thus are described. *To do Good and to*
 16. *distribute forget not, for with such Sacrifi-*
 ces God is well pleased. *Charity shall*
 cover

cover the Multitude of Sins. The merciful Prov. xi.
17.
Man doth Good to his own Soul. Blessed Mat. v. 7.
are the merciful; for they shall obtain
Mercy. What have any of us that we
have not received? It is all the Bounty
of Heaven; the free Gift of Him in Whom
we live and move and have our Being.
It is a Charge also to them that are Rich in i Tim. vi.
17, 18.
this World, that they trust in The Living
God, Who giveth us richly all Things to
enjoy: That they do Good, that they be
Rich in Good Works. And in so doing,
they may be sure, they shall in no Wise
lose their Reward. For God loveth a 2 Cor. ix.
7.
cheerful Giver: His Blessed Son and Our
Saviour hath said: In as much as ye have
done it unto One of the least of these My Matt. xxv.
40.
Brethren, ye have done it unto Me.

Y E T these further Aids of Charity we
 ask at the same Time that we gladly ac-
 knowledge with all Thankfulness the Be-
 nefits already received. The very Purpose
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of this Anniversary Festival is to render most humble and hearty Thanks to Almighty God for the singular Success wherewith He hath prospered this Work of Christian Piety. And because His Blessing hath been granted chiefly through the Ministry of His Servants whom He hath set in Authority over us: Therefore it becometh us well to declare our Gratitude here to OUR GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN, whose Reign hath been distinguished by these Publick Charitable Foundations, which witness the Goodness of his Government, and his Fatherly Care of his People. And considering how the Blessings of Divine Providence have been vouched to Our Infirmary, we gladly own Our Obligations to The Father of Our Church, Who favoureth with his peculiar Inspection this Provision for the Sick and Lame Poor: And hath Himself most clearly manifested the Evangelical Reasonableness of the Institution. * Next to all
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* See Lord Bishop of Durham's Sermon, preached before the President and Governors of the London Infirmary,

in general the Contributors and Benefactors to this Infirmary, according to their respective Dignities and Distinctions; especially to the Presidents, the Vice-presidents, the Treasurer, the Governors we pay Our grateful Acknowledgments. Furthermore to all and every of those who have been concerned either in giving Medicines to relieve the bodily Infirmities of the Sick; or in administering Christian Comfort to the Feeble-minded with the sacred Offices of Religion we render the Thanks of them that have been and that are Partakers of this Charity; and with all the Thanks of this Charitable Society.

BUT to God alone appertaineth the Glory of all. To Him therefore let us offer Our Thanksgiving and Praise for the good Christian Services which have been done by the Benefit of this Infirmary, to relieve Sufferings, to cure Maladies, to give Health to the Sick, and Comfort to
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the Afflicted. Of Him with devout Supplication let us beg the Blessing of Heaven upon this Work of Charity and every One of its Benefactors.

AND now to the all-bounteous Giver of every good and perfect Gift, to God The Father, The Son, and The Holy Ghost be ascribed all Honour and Power, Majesty and Dominion for ever and ever.
Amen.

F I N I S.



